

VPP: General Electric Contractual Services, River Road Generating Plant, Vancouver, achieves top recognition for occupational safety and health as Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) STAR.

General Electric Contractual Services (GECS), operating the River Road Generating Plant in Vancouver for Clark Public Utilities received national and state recognition for their exemplary efforts in support of workplace safety and health. General Electric was approved as a VPP STAR site on April 4, 2006. The VPP STAR status is awarded by the Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) to worksites who have achieved outstanding safety and health programs. The GE site which employs 19 workers submitted an application and received an on-site review by a team of four DOSH Safety and Health professionals before achieving the VPP STAR status. The site maintains their status by continuous improvement of their safety and health programs, conducting comprehensive annual self-evaluations and a comprehensive onsite evaluation every three years by DOSH staff.

The River Road Generating Plant is a 248 Mega Watt gas-fired combined cycle power generation facility owned by Clark Public Utilities. The facility achieved commercial operation in October 1997 and has been operated by GE Contractual Services since March 1, 2000. The facility is located on approximately 10 acres in the port of Vancouver and provides electrical power to the residents of Clark County.

The worksites potential hazards are those typically associated with the manufacturing of electrical power, to include moving-working equipment, high temperature, high pressure, electrical, thermal, material-handling equipment, respiratory, walking/working surfaces, confined spaces, falls and hazardous chemicals. Despite these hazards the site's three year average injury/illness total recordable and days away restricted transferred (DART) incident rates for 2002-2005 were zeros in both categories.



On Saturday, June 17, 2006, GECS celebrated achieving the prestige's STAR status by hosting an award ceremony for employees and guests at the Heathman Lodge in Vancouver, WA. General Electric became the 28th workplace in Washington to be designated a Voluntary Protection Program STAR worksite, and one of only 1535 across the nation.

The award ceremony was overseen by Terry Toland, GECS River Road Generating Plant Manager who started things out with a welcome address and opening remarks, followed by Jim Jacks, liaison for Governor Gregoire; Mary Zeglen, GECS Energy Services VPP /GS Manager; Tony Salvadore, GECS Corporate Environmental Health and Safety Manager; Carol Curtis, Clark Public Utilities Commissioner; Frank Bibens, General Manager, Global O & M Services; John Cioffi, GECS Western Regional Manager and Steve Ellsworth, GECS River Road Generating Plant Shift Supervisor, all made comments on the momentous accomplishments and achievement.

Picture 1: Carol Curtis, Clark Public Utilities Commissioner

The evening continued with the presentation of the DOSH awards. Steve Cant, Assistant Director for DOSH Services presented the STAR certificate to Terry Toland and thanked the site for their commitment to safety and health. Lynda Stoneberg, VPP onsite Team Leader, DOSH Consultation asked GE to encourage other employers to follow their lead and then called up the rest of the DOSH onsite review team, Ken Werenko, John Geppert and Gail Owens and presented the WISHA STAR flag to the GE River Road employees.



Picture 2 (left to right): Steve Cant, Assistant Director for DOSH Services and Lynda Stoneberg, VPP Onsite Team Leader, DOSH Consultation present the VPP plaque to Terry Toland, GE Manager, River Road Facility.



Picture 3 (from left to right): Front - Steve Cadonau, Doug Edington, Margie Brice, Collette Hurst, Terry Toland Back - Ben Gilder, Dana, Christensen, Dan Wamsley, Walter Smith, Rueben Divine, Steve Ellsworth, Ken Roach.

The festivities continued with Terry presenting individual awards to each employee and one owner/customer. The formal portion of the celebration concluded with a special guest speaker, Col. Al Worden, Apollo 15 Command Module Pilot.



Picture 4 (left to right): Jack Anderson, Energy Resource Manager, Clark Public Utilities receiving an individual award by Terry Toland, GE Manager, River Road Facility.



Picture 5: Col. Al Worden, Apollo 15 Command Module Pilot.

For more information, contact Terry Toland, GE Manager, River Road Generating plant.

For more information about WISHA's Voluntary Protection Program in which the Division of Occupational Safety and Health and Washington companies work together to improve safety and health program, call DOSH, Kenneth Werenko, Safety and Health VPP Specialist (360) 902-5515 or Lynda Stoneberg, Safety and Health Specialist (360) 902-5554.